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DOE AND HBCUs PARTNER TO ADVANCE EDUCATIONAL AND FUTURE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITY STUDENTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA AND NORTHEAST GEORGIA

Columbia, SC – Today the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Environmental Management (EM) and nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) of South Carolina and Northeast Georgia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance relationships and resources that promote educational and future employment opportunities for minority students in the critical areas of math, science, technology, and engineering.

The MOU enhances DOE-EM's continued support and funding for HBCUs to secure a future skilled and diverse scientific workforce to help our Nation address critical environmental cleanup challenges. The MOU also further advances the vision of U.S. Representative James E. Clyburn (D-SC) to establish structured academic programs that integrate curriculum, hands-on field work, and applied research that lead to employment opportunities in the fields of math, science and technology for the predominately minority student population of HBCUs.

"This MOU reaffirms DOE's commitment to do our part in teaming with HBCUs to support educational and employment opportunities for minority students. This alliance will promote training, internship and employment opportunities at DOE sites and National Laboratories," said Dr. Inés R. Triay; DOE Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. "This win-win partnership will yield the next generation of a skilled and diverse scientific workforce that will be of tremendous value to DOE in meeting our critical cleanup goals."

HBCUs partnering with DOE-EM include: Allen University, Benedict College, Claflin University, Denmark Technical College, Morris College, Clinton Junior College, South Carolina State University, Voorhees College in South Carolina and Paine College in Northeast Georgia.

"As a staunch advocate of HBCUs, I am pleased to be here to witness the signing of this Memorandum of Understanding that memorializes the good faith effort of these institutions of higher learning and DOE to join together to expand academic and future job opportunities for minority students in science-related fields," said Congressman Clyburn during a ceremonial event

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marking the signing of the MOU at Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina. “DOE has answered the call to support concrete and tangible efforts that provide real opportunities to HBCUs and the thousands of students they serve.”

Other key participants at the MOU signing ceremony included: David Rivers, Assistant Professor and Director for Public Involvement, Medical University of South Carolina; Presidents from each of the partnering HBCUs; Cynthia Anderson, Director, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Project for DOE-EM, and Jeffrey Allison, Manager, DOE-Savannah River Operations Office.

HBCUs technical and programmatic expertise has helped DOE’s Environmental Management program advance research and development of innovative technologies and approaches for solving the Nation’s critical environmental cleanup problems. The collaboration with the Universities has been a cost-effective means of providing valuable remediation data for DOE-EM while providing hands-on and field-oriented experiences for students. The data obtained by the students has enabled EM to develop comprehensive and technically justifiable cleanup remediation strategies. The partnerships of DOE and HBCUs allow students to apply math and science principles to solve problems in environmental science, natural science, agriculture and engineering, utilizing the expertise and resources available within DOE-EM.

As DOE meets the challenge to clean up the legacy of the Nation’s nuclear weapons production activities, partnerships with HBCUs offer valuable support to solve significant technical problems, overcome barriers to new solutions, and implement innovative solutions that accelerate cleanup, reduce costs, and protect workers, the public, and environment.

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